LISTING OF CLAIMS

This listing of claims, if entered, will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the above-identified application.

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

a data processing system receiving a request to reserve ~~for~~ a ~~function~~ space for use on at least a future date, wherein a category of a plurality of categories comprises the space, wherein the data processing system stores availability information for a plurality of function spaces at a plurality of properties, an authorization level for the category, and a set of pricing rules, and wherein the request comprises a plurality of criteria;

a processor determining an availability of ~~the~~ each of a plurality of function space~~s~~ in the category on the future date, wherein the determining the availability further comprises determining the availability based upon some or all of the availability information, and one or more of the plurality of criteria~~, and a day part for which the function space is requested~~;

determining that none of the plurality of [[a]] ~~requested~~ function space~~s~~ in the category that satisfy~~ing~~ the one or more of the plurality of criteria are ~~is un~~available on the future date;

accessing the authorization level for the category, in response to the determining that none of the plurality of function spaces are available, wherein the authorization level indicates how many overbookings are allowed for the category on the future date;

automatically providing a real-time price quote for the ~~requested function~~ space based on the set of pricing rules, in response to determining that an additional overbooking is allowed for the category, based upon a comparison of the authorization level to a number of existing reservations for function spaces in the category on the future date~~, wherein in response to determining that the requested function space satisfying the one or more of the plurality of criteria is unavailable, an alternative to the requested function space is presented, the alternative is selected as a closest~~

~~approximation to the request, the alternative is selected based on being fully~~ ~~available~~;

receiving an acceptance of the real-time price quote for the ~~requested function~~ space from a user;

~~establishing a reservation for~~ <u>overbooking a category space in the category</u> ~~the requested~~ ~~function space~~<u>, in response to the acceptance</u>, wherein~~, if said function space is~~ ~~unavailable, said~~ <u>the overbooking comprises accepting a</u> reservation <u>for the</u> <u>category space for use on the future date even though none of the function spaces</u> <u>in the category are currently determined to be available on the future date;</u> ~~comprises an overbooking, and~~

<u>subsequent to the overbooking, mapping the category space to a specific function space</u> <u>in the category, wherein the specific function space satisfies the one or more of</u> <u>the plurality of criteria, and wherein the specific function space becomes available</u> <u>for reservation due to a cancellation made subsequent to the overbooking; and</u>

converting, <u>after the mapping</u> ~~after a delay~~, <u>the reservation for the category space</u> ~~said~~ ~~reservation~~ to a reservation for [[a]] <u>the</u> specific <u>function</u> space~~, wherein~~
~~the converting comprises displaying a graphical representation of a hierarchical~~
~~relationship between a category space and the specific space,~~
~~in the graphical representation, the category space is arranged vertically with the~~
~~specific space sharing a horizontal axis, and~~
~~the specific space comprises a specific space configuration,~~
~~the specific space configuration comprises one or more alphabetically-identified~~
~~specific spaces.~~

2.   (Cancelled)

3.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the plurality of properties are individual hotels of a hotel chain.

4.   (Cancelled)

5.   (Cancelled)

6.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

receiving a rejection of the real-time price quote ~~for the requested function space~~ from the user; and

providing a set of alternatives to one or more of the plurality of criteria in real-time, in response to the receiving the rejection, wherein the set of alternatives are available on the future date.

7.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6 wherein the ~~establishing the reservation for the requested function space includes allocating a function space of a specified category, the~~ category is specified by one or more category-related criteria included in the plurality of criteria.

8.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7 wherein the category-related criteria include one or more criteria selected from the group consisting of attendance, event type, setup styles and area.

9.   (Currently Amended) A tangible machine-readable storage medium that provides executable instructions~~, which~~ that, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to ~~perform a method, the method comprising~~:

~~receiving~~ receive a request to reserve ~~for~~ a ~~function~~ space for use on at least a future date, wherein a category of a plurality of categories comprises the space, wherein the request comprises a plurality of criteria;

~~determining~~ determine an availability of ~~the~~ each of a plurality of function spaces in the category on the future date, ~~wherein the determining the availability further comprises determining the availability~~ based upon some or all of availability information for a plurality of function spaces at a plurality of properties[[,]] and one or more of the plurality of criteria;

~~determining~~ determine that none of the plurality of [[a]] ~~requested~~ function spaces in the category satisfy~~ing~~ the one or more of the plurality of criteria are ~~is un~~available on the future date;

access an authorization level for the category, in response to the determining that none of the plurality of function spaces are available on the future date, wherein the authorization level indicates how many overbookings are allowed for the category on the future date;

automatically provide ~~providing~~ a real-time price quote for the ~~requested function~~ space based on a set of pricing rules, in response to determining that an additional overbooking is allowed for the category on the future date, based upon a comparison of the authorization level to a number of existing reservations for function spaces in the category on the future date; ~~wherein in response to determining that the requested function space satisfying the one or more of the plurality of criteria is unavailable, an alternative to the requested function space is presented,~~

~~the alternative is selected as a closest approximation to the request,~~

~~the alternative is selected based on the alternative being fully available;~~

~~receiving~~ receive an acceptance of the real time price quote for the ~~requested function~~ space from a user;

~~establishing a reservation for~~ overbook a category space in the category ~~the requested function space~~, in response to the acceptance, wherein~~, if said function space is unavailable, said~~ overbooking the category space comprises accepting a reservation for the category space for use on the future date even though none of the function spaces in the category are currently determined to be available on the future date; ~~comprises an overbooking, and~~

subsequent to the category space being overbooked, map the category space to a specific function space in the category, wherein the specific function space satisfies the

one or more of the plurality of criteria, and wherein the specific function space becomes available for reservation due to a cancellation made subsequent to the category space being overbooked; and

convert[[ing]], after mapping the category space ~~after a delay~~, the reservation for the category space ~~said reservation~~ to a reservation for [[a]] the specific function space~~, wherein~~

~~the converting comprises displaying a graphical representation of a hierarchical relationship between a category space and the specific space,~~

~~in the graphical representation, the category space is arranged vertically with the specific space sharing a horizontal axis,~~

~~the specific space comprises a specific space configuration, and~~

~~the specific space configuration comprises one or more alphabetically identified specific spaces.~~

10.   (Cancelled)

11.   (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 9 wherein the plurality of properties are individual hotels of a hotel chain.

12.   (Cancelled)

13.   (Cancelled)

14.   (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the executable instructions are further configured to ~~method performed by the processor further comprising~~:

~~receiving~~ receive a rejection of the price quote for the ~~requested function~~ space from the user; and

provide ~~providing~~ a set of alternatives to one or more of the plurality of criteria in real-time, in response to receipt of the rejection, wherein the set of alternatives are available on the future date.

15.   (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 14 wherein the ~~establishing the reservation for the requested function space includes allocating a function space of a specified category, the~~ category is specified by one or more category-related criteria included in the plurality of criteria.

16.   (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 15 wherein the category-related criteria include one or more criteria selected from the group consisting of attendance, event type, setup styles and area.

17.   (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a central data processing system having a memory device, the memory device having stored thereon: availability information for a plurality of function spaces at a plurality of properties, an authorization level for a category, and a set of pricing rules;

the central data processing system having a processor configured to:

receive a request to reserve a space for use on at least a future date, wherein the category of a plurality of categories comprises the space, wherein the request comprises a plurality of criteria;

determine an availability of each of a plurality of function spaces in the category on the future date, based upon some or all of availability information for a plurality of function spaces at a plurality of properties and one or more of the plurality of criteria;

determine that none of the plurality of function spaces in the category satisfy the one or more of the plurality of criteria are available on the future date;

access an authorization level for the category, in response to the determining that none of the plurality of function spaces are available, wherein the authorization level indicates how many overbookings are allowed for the category on the future date;

automatically provide a real-time price quote for the space based on a set of pricing rules, in response to determining that an additional overbooking is allowed for the category on the future date, based upon a comparison of

the authorization level to a number of existing reservations for function spaces in the category on the future date;

receive an acceptance of the real time price quote for the space from a user;

overbook a category space in the category, in response to the acceptance, wherein overbooking the category space comprises accepting a reservation for the category space for use on the future date even though none of the function spaces in the category are currently determined to be available on the future date;

subsequent to the category space being overbooked, map the category space to a specific function space in the category, wherein the specific function space satisfies the one or more of the plurality of criteria, and wherein the specific function space becomes available for reservation due to a cancellation made subsequent to the category space being overbooked; and

convert, after mapping the category space, the reservation for the category space to a reservation for the specific function space

~~provide an availability determination for a function space, wherein~~

~~the availability determination comprises a determination based upon some or all of the availability information,~~

~~the availability determination comprises a determination in response to receiving a request for the function space; and~~

~~the central data processing system being further configured to~~

~~determine that a requested function space satisfying the one or more of the plurality of criteria is unavailable,~~

~~automatically generate a real-time price quote for the requested function space based on the set of pricing rules, wherein~~

~~if said availability determination by said central data processing system indicates that the requested function space is unavailable, an alternative to the requested function space is presented,~~

~~the alternative is selected as a closest approximation to the request, and~~

~~the alternative is selected based on the alternative being fully available,~~

~~receive an acceptance of the real-time price quote for the requested function space,~~

~~establish a reservation for the requested function space, wherein, if said function space is unavailable, said reservation comprises an overbooking,~~

~~convert, after a delay, said reservation to a reservation for the specific space, and~~

~~display a graphical representation of a hierarchical relationship between a category space and the specific space, wherein in the graphical representation, the category space is arranged vertically with the specific space sharing a horizontal axis with the category space, and the specific space comprises a specific space configuration, wherein the specific space configuration comprises one or more alphabetically-identified specific spaces.~~

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17 wherein the plurality of properties are individual hotels of a hotel chain.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 17, wherein the ~~said~~ central digital processing system is further configured to:

receive a rejection of the real-time price quote for the requested function space; and

provide an alternative to ~~the~~ said request in real-time in response to ~~the~~ said rejection, in response to receipt of the rejection, wherein the set of alternatives are available on the future date.

23. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 22 wherein ~~said central digital processing system is configured to establish the reservation for the requested function space by allocating a function space of a specified category,~~ the category is specified by one or more category-related criteria included in the request.

24. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 23 wherein the category-related criteria include one or more criteria selected from the group consisting of attendance, event type, setup styles and area.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of criteria includes criteria selected from a group of criteria consisting of date, day-part and supplementary sales.

26. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 9 wherein the plurality of criteria includes criteria selected from a group of criteria consisting of date, day-part and supplementary sales.

27. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the said request includes a plurality of criteria selected from a group of criteria consisting of date, day-part and supplementary sales.

28.-32. (Cancelled)

33. (Currently Amended) A method, the method comprising:
a data processing system receiving a request for a function space in a particular category, wherein
the data processing system stores availability information for a plurality of function spaces in a common reservation table,

the common reservation table concurrently stores information related to an

    inventory of [[a]] <u>the plurality of function spaces,</u> ~~specific space and~~

    <u>wherein the plurality of function spaces is represented by</u> a <u>corresponding</u>

    <u>plurality of</u> category space<u>s, and wherein each of the category spaces</u>

    <u>represents a non-specific unit of function space in the particular category</u>

    ~~representing the function space~~,

each of the plurality of function spaces is <u>a specific space</u> located at one of a

    plurality of properties,

the data processing system stores a set of pricing rules,

the request comprises a plurality of criteria,

the plurality of criteria comprises a ranking of facility quality, and

the pricing rules comprise rules for pricing the function space based on a time of

    year;

a processor of a central reservation system data processing system determining an

    availability of the function space, wherein

the determining comprises determining the availability based upon some or all of

    the availability information[[,]] and one or more of the plurality of criteria,

~~said~~ <u>the</u> determining comprises determining the availability contingent on a

    threshold revenue for the function space,

the threshold revenue comprises an expected food and drink revenue associated

    with the request[[,]] and revenue derived from an expected number of

    sleeping room rentals associated with the request, and

the threshold revenue is determined based on a day part for which the function

    space is requested;

automatically providing a real-time price quote for the request based on the set of pricing

    rules, wherein

in response to having determined that a requested function space satisfying the

    plurality of criteria is unavailable, an alternative to the requested function

    space is presented,

the alternative is selected as a closest approximation to the request,

the alternative is selected based on being fully available,

the pricing rules comprise general pricing rules[[,]] and property-specific pricing rules, and

the real-time price quote includes a pricing discount based on an attendance of an event, profit for one or more expected guest room rentals, and an expected profit on food and drink sales;

in response to a user rejecting the real time price quote, presenting ~~a plurality of~~ the alternative[[s]];

receiving an acceptance of the real-time price quote for the function space from a user;

establishing a reservation for one of the ~~the function space as the~~ category space_s_ allocated for a length of time including a setup period and teardown period, wherein

~~said~~ the length of time is determined in response to a selected setup style and the attendance~~, and~~

~~if said function space is unavailable, said reservation comprises an overbooking~~; and

converting, after a delay, ~~said~~ the reservation for the one of the category spaces to a reservation for one of the function spaces ~~the specific space, wherein~~

~~the converting comprises displaying a graphical representation of a hierarchical relationship between the category space and the specific space,~~

~~the category space is arranged vertically with the specific space sharing a horizontal axis, and~~

~~the category space comprises a specific space configuration, wherein the configuration comprises one or more alphabetically-identified specific spaces.~~